

Permanent Memorial Commission  
February 15, 2017

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE PERMANENT MEMORIAL COMMISSION

The Permanent Memorial Commission held a special meeting Wednesday, February 15, 2017 in the meeting room at Town Hall South, 3 Main Street, Newtown. Chairman Lyddy called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and began with a moment of silence.

**PRESENT:** Joanne Bacon, Joanne Brunetti, Brian Engel, Dan Krauss, Kyle Lyddy, Alan Martin, Agni Pavlidou Kyprianou, Tricia Pinto

**ABSENT:** Sarah Middeleer, Donna VanWaalwijk

**ALSO PRESENT:** Three members of the public and one member of the press.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** none.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Martin moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of 1/12/17. Ms. Brunetti seconded. All in favor.

**ROCK OF ANGELS – RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN:** Mr. Lyddy went over bullet points relative to the recommendation of the Rock of Angels to the Board of Selectmen (att.) and invited feedback. Discussion of commission members included a vision of having the Rock of Angels integrated into the memorial site as part of the pathway to the site but deferring to the families. It was recalled that the parents were not in favor of angels. Mr. Lyddy stated that First Selectman Llodra said the rock could be stored if it was to be part of the memorial. The town will not accept the land unless there is a place for the memorial to be moved to. The church was noble in accepting the rock, it served as a place of reflection and it would be nice to find a place to move it to, such as the pathway to the memorial site. People have connected to the piece and it was suggested to send a letter to the families for feedback. The families were never consulted about this memorial and questioned why it would be accepted now if the way in which it was brought to the town would not have been endorsed by the commission at the time. The memorial can be possibly be resurfaced and redone if there are names represented in a way not agreeable to the families; it can be modified to be more neutral. The way in which it came to town, without the consulting the families leaves negative feelings. Mr. Lyddy moved to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the Town of Newtown not accept the Rock of Angels as part of the permanent memorial site. Mr. Engel seconded. The motion passed 7-1 (Yes: Bacon, Brunetti, Engel, Krauss, Lyddy, Martin, Pinto) (No: Pavlidou Kyprianou).

**SITE SELECTION UPDATE:** The deed should be complete this week. There will be a deed for each, the Permanent Memorial Commission, the Sandy Hook Fire Department and for Underwater Search & Rescue. A map of SAC is being completed by JMC. The outline will be determined and the commission decides what goes within the boundaries. This will be town land, maintained by the town. Prior to the next meeting the hope is to have the deeds signed and maps complete. The process will continue with the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and the Legislative Council. If anyone wants to visit the site they are asked to communicate with George Benson.

Rec'd. for Record 2-17 2017  
Town Clerk of Newtown 8:24am  
Debbie Aurelia Halstead

**DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT – FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR COMPLETION:** The town will take ownership of the land. Ms. Brunetti will connect with people she worked with many years ago on the creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Rogers Park in Danbury. The majority of the money for that was through private donations; she suggested rethinking the fundraising letter as she doesn't believe the commission will get money from corporate entities. Bob Geckle was recommended as a good resource to help with the fundraising. Mr. Krauss noted that corporations have specific criteria for donating; Ms. Brunetti said the commission must be a 501c3. Mr. Lyddy asked the commission to let Ms. VanWaalwijk know of anyone that may be considered for donations so she can keep a list. Ms. Brunetti and Mr. Krauss have gone over lists of offered services from Parks & Recreation, the Library Board of Trustees and the Cultural Arts Commission and do not believe there is anything that can be used. Ms. Pavlidou Kyprianou said once there is a site plan there will be a better idea of cost, what is needed, size and features. There may be large local businesses willing to donate; banks give grants.

**COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSION:** Ms. Brunetti emailed the person who reached out regarding a memorial for the Orlando Pulse nightclub. They are in the very early stages of the process.

**MICELLANEOUS:**

Mr. Lyddy will work on the website and subsites.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business the Permanent Memorial Commission adjourned their regular meeting at 7:54pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Marcinek, Clerk pro tem

*Attachment: Rock of Angel's recommendation draft discussion*



**Sandy Hook  
Permanent  
Memorial  
Commission**

**SHPMC 'Rock of Angels' Recommendations to Board of Selectman  
February 15, 2017  
DRAFT For Discussion**

**The Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission has outlined the below feedback in regards to the Rock of Angels and ultimately leave the decision up to the Newtown Board of Selectmen using the below to guide their decision.**

- There are some Newtown residents who find the Rock of Angels to be a tranquil place for reflection and therefore would find it to be inappropriate for our Commission to rip that from those community members

**That being said, the Commission has some concerns, which are reflected below:**

- This Commission has prided itself on communication to the families most impacted by this tragedy, and the way in which this memorial was brought to the Town would not have been endorsed by this Commission
- There seems to be a religious component to this memorial specific to the 'angels' and where this is currently positioned in the community (behind St. Johns Church)
- How the names of victims are presented on the Rock of Angels may not be the way family members of victims would like to have their loved ones remembered
- It is too early for this Commission to make a decision on if this can, or would be appropriate, to be part of the one memorial currently being planned.
- If this were to stay as is, it would go against this Commissions recommendation to have one memorial within the community